In the claims:

Claim 1 cancelled.

2. (currently amended) The handheld power saw as defined by claim ~~1~~24, wherein the bracing means (18, 18') is configured for bracing on both sides against shear forces on the saw blade (12).

3. (currently amended) The handheld power saw as defined claim ~~1~~24, wherein the bracing means (18, 18') is configured as a slide bearing.

4. (withdrawn and currently amended) The handheld power saw as defined by claim ~~1~~24, wherein the coupling means (10) is configured as a detent coupling.

5. (currently amended) The handheld power saw as defined by claim ~~1~~24, wherein the bracing means (18, 18') forms a two-dimensional contact face (46).

6. (previously presented) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 5, further including the saw blade (12), wherein the contact face (46) has a length (48) of at least 2 cm in a longitudinal direction (26) of the saw blade (12).

7. (withdrawn) A handheld power saw, comprising a housing (20b), having a contact element (22b) for bracing the housing (20b) on a workpiece and a saw blade (12b), movable in oscillating fashion in a first direction (26b), with at least one cutting edge (30b) pointing in a working direction (28b), wherein the contact element (22b) is supported displaceably relative to the housing (20b).

8. (withdrawn) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 7, wherein the contact element (22b) is displaceable, with a front edge (32b) pointing in the working direction (28b), at least as far as a height of the cutting edge (30b).

9. (withdrawn) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 7, wherein the contact element (22b) has a recess (34b) that is open in the working direction (28b).

10. (withdrawn) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 7, further comprising a spring element (36b) for restoring the contact element (22b) to a position of repose.

11. (withdrawn) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 7, further comprising a detent element (24b) for locking the contact element (22b) in a detent position.

12. (withdrawn) A saw blade (12) for a handheld power saw, comprising an oscillatory drive mechanism (38), a retention region (40) which is intended for connection with a coupling means (10) of the handheld power saw, and a guide region (42) for contact of a lateral bracing means (18, 18') of the handheld power saw.

13. (withdrawn) The saw blade (12) as defined by claim 12, wherein the guide region (42) has a greater thickness of material than a work region (44) with a cutting edge (30).

14. (withdrawn) The saw blade (12) as defined by claim 12, wherein the guide region (42) and the work region (44) are joined by a laser welding process.

Claim 15 cancelled.

16. (currently amended) ~~The handheld power saw as defined by claim 15~~ A handheld power saw, comprising a coupling means (10) for retaining and driving a saw blade (12) and connecting the saw blade (12) to a lifting rod (64) in an installed state of the saw blade (12), and a guide assembly (14) for guiding an oscillating motion (16) of the saw blade (12), wherein the guide assembly (14) includes at least one lateral bracing means (18, 18') located

between the saw blade (12) and the lifting rod (64) in a region of the coupling means (10) and shielding the coupling means (10) from shear forces acting on the saw blade (12), wherein the guide assembly (14) includes a pressure roller (52), supported in sliding fashion on a bolt (50) and a pressure bolt (68) for guiding the saw blade (12), wherein the bolt (50) and the pressure bolt (68) are inserted in recesses which are provided in the bracing means (18, 18').

17. (previously presented) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 16, wherein the recesses project out of an opposite face of the bracing means (18, 18') of the contact face (46).

18. (previously presented) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 15, wherein the pressure roller (52) guides the saw blade (12) at a reverse edge of a cutting edge (30).

19. (previously presented) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 1, wherein two lateral bracing means (18, 18') are provided.

20. (previously presented) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 19, wherein in an installed state of the saw blade (12) the two bracing means (18, 18') are located mirror-symmetrically beside the saw blade (12).

21. (previously presented) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 1, wherein the bracing means (18, 18') is composed of graphite-containing, lubricant-filled sintered bronze.

22. (previously presented) The handheld power saw as defined by claim 1, wherein the bracing means (18, 18') has a rounded area (72) in a front region of the bracing means (18, 18') facing the saw blade (12).

23. (currently amended) ~~The handheld power saw as defined by claim 1~~ A handheld power saw, comprising a coupling means (10) for retaining and driving a saw blade (12) and connecting the saw blade (12) to a lifting rod (64) in an installed state of the saw blade (12), and a guide assembly (14) for guiding an oscillating motion (16) of the saw blade (12), wherein the guide assembly (14) includes at least one lateral bracing means (18, 18') located between the saw blade (12) and the lifting rod (64) in a region of the coupling means (10) and shielding the coupling means (10) from shear forces acting on the saw blade (12, wherein in an installed state of the saw blade (12) the contact face (46) of the bracing means (18, 18') abuts on a guide region (42) of the saw blade (12), located in a working direction (28) between a retaining region (40) of the saw blade (12) and a work region (44) of the saw blade (12).

24. (new) A hand-held power saw, comprising a lifting rod; a saw blade connected with said lifting rod and movable in an oscillating motion; coupling means (10) for retaining and driving said saw blade (12) and connecting said saw blade (12) to said lifting rod (64); a guide assembly (14) for guiding the oscillation motion (16) of the saw blade (12), wherein said guide assembly (14) includes at least one lateral bracing means (18a, 18a') for shielding said coupling means (10) from shear forces acting on said saw blade (12), wherein said bracing means is located in a region of said coupling means (10) and directly guide said saw blade (12) during its oscillating motion.